



Congressman Tim Bishop

FIRST DISTRICT -- NEW YORK

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BISHOP RELEASES NEW REPORT SHOWING LOCAL SCHOOLS UNDERFUNDED BY NEARLY \$28 MILLION

Shortfall Places Unfunded Federal Mandate on Local Taxpayers

Washington, DC: With students across Suffolk County returning to school, Congressman Tim Bishop today released a new report that shows the extent of unfunded federal mandates on local taxpayers. According to the report compiled by the non-partisan Congressional Research Service (CRS) at Bishop's request, the federal government will underfund schools in the 1st Congressional District by nearly \$28 million this year alone.

Currently the government funds special education at 18 percent of total expenses, in spite a commitment to fund it at a promised level of 40 percent. This shortfall cost schools in the 1st district \$23,947,000 this year. Special education is funded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The failure to fully fund the No Child Left Behind Act cost our local school districts an additional \$4,007,800. Throughout New York State, No Child Left Behind is underfunded by \$718 million, and IDEA by \$709 million, which increases State taxes.

"I commissioned this report because I have talked to local taxpayers who want to provide our children with a world-class education, but are concerned the federal government is not doing its part," Bishop said. "And this report shows they're right. The failure of the federal government to live up to its promises passes the buck to Long Island taxpayers, saddling us with even higher local and state taxes, while leaving our children behind."

Because special education spending and the No Child Left Behind Act are both mandates from the federal government, local school districts must make up the funding difference themselves. As a result, districts are forced to choose between higher taxes or reduced spending in other areas.

Bishop, a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, is a co-sponsor of a bill to fully fund the No Child Left Behind Act as well as separate legislation for the federal government to live up to its commitment to fully fund IDEA.

"Funding these programs will mean real, immediate property tax relief for Long Islanders while maintaining high academic standards in our schools," Bishop said.

The 10 most underfunded schools in the District are: William Floyd (\$3,304,400), Sachem (\$2,912,000), Middle Country (\$2,582,400), Longwood (\$2,524,000), Patchogue (\$2,040,800), Smithtown (\$1,883,300), Riverhead (\$1,507,500), Three Village (\$1,482,000), South Country (\$1,435,400), Kings Park (\$895,000).

In June, Bishop held a forum on funding shortfalls in No Child Left Behind, where he heard from local parents, educators and students about the need for the government to fund its commitments.

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